UTE SUNDANCE HELD AT WHITEROCK'S GROUNDS

Utes Surprise All Their White Brethern and Hold Annual Festival At Sacred Sundance Grounds

Scattered here and there, some of them where they had dropped from exhaustion, still in their warpaint and feathers and all sleeping the sleep of the utterly exhausted, unconscious as to what was going on around them, thirty Ute Indians, the most stalwart bucks of the Ute tribe, some with their faces towards the Great Spirit, Heavenward, others with their faces pillowed in their hands, slept and slept last Sunday at the sacred Sundance grounds at Whiterocks The Ute Indian Sundance was over.

The Sundance, after four days of continuous dancing, ended at nine o'clock, Sunday. Inside of a twinkling the exhausted warriors, for those who lasted until the end of the dance are admitted into that sacred circle of the Utes, were fast asleep and not until many hours later did any one of them show signs of returning consciousness

This year s Sundance took everyone by surprise Several weeks ago the Utes decided to hold no Sundance Later they changed their minds The only announcement made in any paper in the Uintah Basin was made in last weeks Express, which simply stated that the Sundance was in progress The dance had been in progress for two days, so secretive were the Utes' as to when it was going to be held, before any public announcement was made All day Saturday following the announcement in the Express a string of autos made their way to the Sundance grounds Sunday a larger number set out but these were destined to be disappointed for after dancing all Saturday night, the dance suddenly ceased at nine o'clock, although it was understood that the big feast which follows was to have been held Sunday evening and the dance continued until then

This year's dance was more gorgeous than usual A larger number of Utes danced The number of spectators was far less than in former years Could this dance have been advertised to take place on certain dates, people would have been present from all over the western states, as this is the last place where the Sundance the most sacred of all Indian Dances, is allowed to take place Even here the government has compelled the Utes to eliminate all the torture features and the dance is but a resemblance to the old Sundance

The dance this year, as always a religious dance, was more so this year, being in the nature of a dance of thanksgiving to the Great Spirit for victory True there was no victory in war to celebrate but instead of the old return of the bands of warriors laden with spoils, the Utes have now adopted more modern methods and several days ago, about sixty of them returned from the southern part of the state where they had been visiting the Southern Utes at Navajo Springs, laden with Navajo rugs of rare and costly design, as well as other evidences of prosperity, which indicated that they had probably been able to show their southern brethern a few things about gambling The returned warriors report having a big time in the southern country